

MADISON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Work Session: 4:00 p.m.

October 27, 2008

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Lane Adamson, Pat Bradley, Kathy Looney, John Lounsbury, Don Loyd, Eileen Pearce, Laurie Schmidt, Ann Schwend, Dorothy Davis

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ed Ruppel, Dave Maddison

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Charity Fechter, Jim Jarvis, Leona Stredwick

STAFF MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Charity Fechter led the work session

Plan Development

A. Growth Policy Review – an overview of the 1999 Madison County Comprehensive Plan Update. Complete review was issued with the agenda packet and is also on file. The following were areas the Board felt needed changes/more attention:

- Conduct Land Evaluation Process, and Institute Site Assessment Process (emphasis on “productive” agriculture lands and “important” wildlife habitat). **NRCS has already identified soil types and information is available with their mapping. It was felt that a better definition of ‘productive’ agriculture lands is needed. NRCS has a definition that allows for local significance. While Madison County has a definition for ‘prime’ ag land, it includes irrigation and is different from ‘productive’ ag land. Productive ag land needs a definition and needs to allow for local significance.**
- Adopt Capital Improvements Plan. **Has been reworked in the past but not as a whole and needs to now be tied in with Development Impact Fees.**
- Identify Areas “Reasonably Accessible” to Emergency Services. **Constraint mapping should be done with both winter and summer response times indicated. Discussion followed regarding how to define districts and who gets the money.**
- Publish & Distribute Subdivision Application Guide. **Board had questions regarding whether or not this was available online. While there are various links online, it was deemed best that subdividers should call and speak with the office directly. It was suggested that some information regarding regulations be posted so that prospective buyers have some information available to them before they commit. Another suggestion was to develop and post a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Charity suggested everyone look at the website and either contact Karen Brown directly or we’d pass on suggestions to Karen.**
- Meet Annually with Municipal Officials and Local Service Providers. **This has not really been done; Charity will make it a priority to set up an annual meeting with local service providers (fire, ambulance, police, utilities, etc).**

- Conduct County Economic Analysis. **It was decided that since we are only two years away from the census that we should put this on hold.**
- Revise County Subdivision Regulations. **Was last done in 2006 and have been amended. At this point, could use some ‘tweaking’, rather than complete revision.**
- Institute Enforcement Program for Subdivision and Zoning Compliance. **No Zoning to monitor. Subdivision Compliance checks are currently lacking but will have more priority now. Planning director is to visit ten sub-divisions per year for compliance checks. Board members discussed and felt it would be good to flag various subdivisions for re-evaluating after approval, i.e. to see how they turned out.**
- Zone Public Lands. **Since public lands are exempt from zoning, this was deleted.**
- Conduct Cost of Services Study, and Institute Development Payment Program (Impact Fee). **A committee is being organized by the Commissioners, Charity will be a member and a member of the Planning Board is requested.**
- Adopt Right to Farm Ordinance. **Has been adopted. A brief discussion arose regarding a Right to Fly ordinance and growing issues regarding private land around airports/strips.**
- Establish a Program for Purchase of Development Rights. **The board is interested in pursuing this, however, Charity pointed out that to be really effective, zoning is needed (there is nothing to trade). Constraint mapping project will be a good place to start this process.**
- Explore Possibilities for Re-aggregation of Lots, Subdivision Redesign, and Agricultural Uses of Idle Lands. **This may be a result of a vital lands project. Discussion regarding incentives, who to approach, how to redesign fee structure, etc. Further discussion pertained to more density being better in subdivisions with more open space beyond. Charity pointed out that while we mention Cluster Development in our regulations, we do not have a policy. The planners will research other county cluster development policies.**
- Explore Property Tax and Other Incentives for Economic Development. **Should be combined with commissioners’ economic development.**
- Map the 100-year Floodplain along Six Rivers. **Deemed too expensive as a FEMA style flood plain map. The board would rather see a combination of flood hazard/channel migration zone/ice gorging mapping.**

Planning office will work on these items and will report on progress at the next meeting.

B. Subdivision Regulations – the following were points of discussion based of Charity’s attachments within the agenda packet and on file:

Chapter II – Subdivisions Subject to Review

1. Consider adding cluster option (per MCA) – allowed but not in regulations **previously discussed in the Planning Development section of the work session; as stated, this will be worked on.**
2. Notification requirement (certified letter) (from # sent for Village Tracts at Moonlight)
 - a. MCA requires notification by certified letter. **County is currently financially responsible for mailing costs. Charity would like to add in fees that will cover this after a certain amount of recipients is reached.**
3. Preliminary Plat and Final Plat Checklists – title abstracts, lien holder and easement notifications. **These are difficult to prove in advance of the final plat and should be researched before the final plat is recorded.**

Chapter IV – Design and Development Standards

1. Standards **(to review, possibly make common conditions requirements based on past actions; experience)**
 - a. Ditch easements **(need to be wider to ensure vehicle access, cleaning)**
 - b. Roadways **(review standards used and where do we want to go with them)**
 - i. Roadway design, material and drainage
 - ii. Bridges
 - iii. Emergency access

Discussion regarding roads in the area that are not accessible for emergency vehicles (driveways as well). Will recommend the county adopt a county road definition and hold all roads/driveways/bridges, etc. within the county to those standards.

Chapter VI – Subdivision Exemptions (2 exemptions that have been used to avoid subdivision regulations)

1. Family conveyance **Discussion to change the policy to allow transfers but with a waiting period (2 years or more before title transfers) thus reducing abuse of this practice.**
2. Boundary adjustment **Adopt a review outlining scenarios that are not acceptable for a boundary adjustment.**

- C. Mapping**
- D. Other**

Leona Stredwick, Secretary